

Appl. No. 10/505,287; Docket No. FR02 0010US
Amdt. dated August 14, 2006
Response to Office Action dated May 25, 2006

Amendments to the Claims

1. *(Previously Presented)* A method of forming electrical connections on a substrate, comprising the following steps:
 - a) depositing an intermediate layer of material on a substrate,
 - b) forming an etching mask on the intermediate layer, said mask having at least one window having dimensions which are larger than the dimensions envisaged for the electrical connections to be realized,
 - c) etching the intermediate layer of material through the window of the mask in order to form therein at least one aperture, having lateral side-walls, for receiving the electrical connections,
 - d) coating the lateral side-walls of the aperture with a spacer in order to narrow the aperture,
 - e) depositing at least one conductor material so as to fill the narrowed aperture, and
 - f) performing an abrasion operation in order to remove excess conductor material outside the narrowed aperture.
2. *(Previously Presented)* A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the step a) utilizes a dielectric material for forming the intermediate layer while a metallic conductor material is used in the step e).
3. *(Previously Presented)* A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the step d) comprises the deposition of a layer of an insulating coating material, followed by the anisotropic etching of this layer so as to preserve a part thereof on the side-walls of the aperture.
4. *(Previously Presented)* A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the side-walls of the aperture are coated by means of a dielectric material having a low dielectric constant (k).
5. *(Previously Presented)* A method as claimed in claim 4, in which the dielectric material of the coating layer is chosen from among fluoruous glass, glass deposited by spinning and silicon oxide containing carbon.

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6. *(Previously Presented)* A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the window of the mask registers with at least one active part of the substrate, and in which said active part of the substrate is exposed during the etching of the intermediate layer of material through the window of the mask.

7. *(Previously Presented)* A method as claimed in claim 1, in which apertures are etched which extend right through the intermediate layer.

8. *(Previously Presented)* A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the mask is formed by means of a photolithography technique, and in which the narrowed apertures have dimensions (d) which are referred to as "ultimate" dimensions which are smaller than those that can be achieved by means of said photolithography technique.

9. *(Previously Presented)* A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the electrical connections comprise wiring tracks and/or terminals and/or vias between layers.

Claims 10-12 *(Cancelled)*

13. *(Cancelled)*